DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 043 320 JC 700 223

AUTHOR Markee, David J.
TITLE A Comparison of Single Freshmen Resident and Commuter Students Perceptions of the Junior College Environment.
PUB DATE [69]
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the EPDA Institute for Advanced Study in Student Personnel Work in Junior Colleges and Technical Institutes, University of Missouri, Columbia, Sept. 9, 1969 to June 1, 1970

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.75
DESCRIPTORS *Environmental Influences, Environmental Research, *Group Behavior, Group Tests, Institutional Research, *Junior Colleges, Junior College Students, Perception Tests, *Student Attitudes, *Student College Relationship
IDENTIFIERS College and University Environment Scales

ABSTRACT

The environmental perceptions of 144 randomly selected freshman students at a southwestern junior college were measured using the College and University Environment Scales (CUES). The sample was equally divided between male and female students, and among three groups: city commuters, rural commuters, and campus residents. Differences between group means on each CUES scale were determined by analysis of variance (t ratio), and tests of significance (F ratio) were applied. Looking at the results, males and females recorded the greatest differences on the awareness and practicality scales, and the greatest similarities on the community and scholarship scales. Within the groups, the greatest spread of scores was noted on the community and propriety scales. Using .05 as the level of significance, only on the awareness scale did the females differ significantly from the males. Strong agreement was noted on the scholarship and community scales. Interestingly, no significant differences among the groups were indicated at the .05 level. Trends indicated by the t ratio show rural commuters perceiving the most and resident students the least emphasis on practicality at their college. In addition, the resident students perceived less emphasis on community than the other groups. A greater contrast between resident and city commuter students was noted on community, propriety, and scholarship than between resident and rural commuter groups. (JO)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED043320

A COMPARISON OF SINGLE FRESHMEN RESIDENT AND COMMUTER STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS OF THE JUNIOR COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

David J. Markee

University of Missouri - Columbia

Murray (1938) coined the term "press" which means that the environment where a person lives either satisfies or frustrates, in degrees, the psychological and emotional needs that a person is striving to satisfy. Many recent articles and books point out the need to look at the different subcultures within a particular college in terms of environmental press (Newcomb, 1966; Dollar, 1966; Jencks and Riesman, 1968). Feldman and Newcomb (1969), in their chapter on residence groupings, point out that a students living group could have a distinct impact on the characteristics of that student. If subcultures do develop because of place of residence, do their perceptions of the environment differ?

Studies have been done comparing the environmental perceptions of students living on campus and at home. Lindahl (1967) found a significant difference between the students on a commuter campus using the College and University Environmental Scales (CUES). He found that the students who commuted did not have strong ties with the school. In 1968, Gelso and Sims conducted a study at a state junior college using the CUES. They found that the students on campus and at home viewed the campus similarily. The results of these studies seem to be conflicting.

JC 700 223

These conflicting results can be explained. Each school tends to have its own prevailing environmental "press", but certain sub-groups within a school may not hold that perception (Pace, 1963). This would tend to explain the results in the related research and give impetus for study of student "press" at a particular school.

The purpose of this study was to determine if a significant difference exists in the environmental perceptions of male and female freshmen students grouped according to their place of residence. A knowledge of those perceptions could provide information for program development and new student orientation.

Method

The study was conducted at a southwestern junior college. It is primarily a transfer oriented college of 2,500 students from twenty-eight states and six foreign countries. About sixty percent of the students live on campus in residence halls.

The population for the study consisted of single, full time freshmen students enrolled in the fall semester, 1969, excluding those students who graduated from high school in 1967 or before. There were approximately 1,200 students in the population. About 800 of these students lived on campus. Of the remaining freshmen about 200 lived within the city limits.

The terms listed below are defined for use in the study:

1. City commuter - freshmen living with parents within the city limits.
2. Rural commuter - freshmen living with parents outside the city limits.
3. Resident - freshmen living on campus in residence halls.

Students from a comprehensive group of freshmen classes were tested. Three subgroups: resident, city commuter and rural commuter were identified. Twenty-four male and twenty-four female students were randomly selected from those tested for each classification. The total sample included 144 students.

The instrument used in this study was the CUES (Pace, 1963). CUES is an instrument designed to measure a students perception of his environment. There are 100 statements to be answered true or false. This is not a test where answers are right or wrong - it is an opinion poll - a way to find out how much agreement or disagreement there is about the characteristics of a campus environment. The CUES was constructed to measure the intellectual, social and cultural climate of a campus. The five major scales in the CUES are:

1. Practicality - practical emphasis in college environment.
2. Community - friendly cohesive group oriented campus.
3. Awareness - concern and emphasis on personal, poetic, political.

4. Propriety - polite and considerate environment, group standard important.
5. Scholarship - emphasis on high accademic achievement and interest in scholarship.

Analysis of variance, which measures the differences between means of groups, was used on each of the CUES scales. Tukey's t test was used to contrast the differences between the three residence classifications. The t ratios obtained from the Tukey determined where the significances existed.

The general null hypothesis that no significant difference existed between any of the groups on perception was tested. A significance level of .05 was used with the F and t ratios. All meaningful comparisons were made.

Results

Table one lists the means and standard deviations for each group on the five CUES scales. The means were based on the number of responses that corresponded with the keyed answer sheet in the CUES manual.

Insert table 1 about here.

The mean score by groups on each scale differed. Ranking the scales for all the students, the following order was observed: awareness, practicality, scholarship, community and propriety. This trend varies slightly from group to group. It should be

noted that the residence hall females mean score ranked scholarship last - considerably below the other groups. The greatest observed difference between the males and females exists on awareness and practicality. Male and female mean scores on community and scholarship seem very much alike. The greatest spread of scores within groups, as indicated by standard deviations, exists on the community and propriety scales.

Table two indicates F ratios obtained when males and females were compared on each CUES scale.

Insert table 2 about here.

The only significant F ratio was on the awareness scale. The females as a group perceived a greater concern and emphasis on the personal, poetic, and political. The observed F ratios on scholarship (.01) and community (.02) indicated strong perceptual agreement.

Table three indicates the F ratio obtained when the classifications: resident, city commuter and rural commuter were compared on each CUES scale.

Insert table 3 about here.

No significant F ratios were found between the three groups on the CUES scales.

Table four contrasts the t ratios obtained from applying Tukey's test of significance.

Insert table 4 about here.

Significant differences were found between the groups using Tukey's t test, but, because no significant F ratios were found these contrasts will only be reported as trends. A noticeable trend existed between the groups on practicality. The rural commuters perceived practicality to be emphasized more than the other groups while the resident students were least concerned. On community the resident students felt that the campus was not as friendly, cohesive and group oriented as the other groups - especially the city commuters. The data did not indicate trends on the other scales. When the resident students and city commuters perceptions were compared on community, propriety and scholarship, a much greater contrast was noted than found between the resident students and rural commuters.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicated some interesting things. Differences were noted when the males and females were compared. Their perceptions were significantly different on awareness. The females perceived a concern and emphasis on the personal, poetic, and political more than the boys. This seems natural for freshmen females to feel a concern about poetic, political and especially personal things. Though not significant the girls seem to feel there exists more of an emphasis on practicality than the boys. It

should be noted that the females and males have similar perceptions regarding the emphasis on scholarship and community.

Trends indicate that the resident students and rural commuters perceptions of the environment are very much alike. Practicality was the only scale where this trend was not evident. When compared with the other groups, the city commuters viewed community, scholarship, and propriety more a part of campus life. One would have expected the greatest difference to be between the resident and rural commuter. It seems that the residence students and rural commuters do not describe the environmental as one conducive to friendly, group oriented things nor do they feel an emphasis on scholarship and propriety. This might indicate that those who live near campus and have constant use of facilities, but are not as closely governed by its regulations, develop different perceptions.

Gelso and Sims (1968) asked the question - Are the perceptions of our students the same as those of our administration and faculty? This question would also seem to ask - Do we really know our student body? Are their perceptions the image we wish to project? Do we consider these perceptions in our programing and planning? Do prospective students have a realistic perception of our school when applying? These topics for future research would help answer the question - Are we what we say we are?

This research and other documented research stress the need to know the subgroups within a school. Many subgroups do view the environment somewhat differently. Opportunities for more programs

that assist subgroups should be developed. Interaction with subgroups will provide an effective avenue of communication and many opportunities for program evaluation.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of the

Male and Female Freshmen Residence Hall Students,

City Commuters and Rural Commuters on the Five CUES Scales

		Scale									
		Practicality		Community		Awareness		Propriety		Scholarship	
Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Residence Hall, Male	24	12.13	2.42	8.38	4.46	12.21	2.68	7.46	3.50	10.75	2.79
Residence Hall, Female	24	13.04	3.24	9.50	4.38	13.67	3.08	8.79	3.88	8.21	3.61
City Commuter, Male	24	11.25	2.86	10.46	3.35	12.04	3.59	8.58	3.93	9.04	2.61
City Commuter, Female	24	12.50	4.28	10.08	3.77	14.25	3.22	9.92	3.83	11.13	3.44
Rural Commuter, Male	24	11.08	3.13	10.42	4.40	11.33	4.06	9.63	4.33	9.79	2.52
Rural Commuter, Female	24	12.08	2.25	9.42	4.03	13.96	2.01	10.13	4.52	10.38	3.12

Table 2

F Ratios Comparing the Males

With the Females On Each CUES Scale

	Scale (F Ratios)				
Group	Practicality	Community	Awareness	Propriety	Scholarship
Males	3.38	.02	15.07*	2.39	.01
Females					

* Significant at the .05 level (F of 3.92 necessary for significance)

Table 3

F Ratios Comparing Residence Hall Students, City Commuters and Rural Commuters on the Five CUES Scales

Group	Practicality	Community	Awareness	Propriety	Scholarship
	Scale (F Ratios)				
Residence Hall					
City Commuters	2.07	1.31	0.28	2.25	0.60
Rural Commuters					

* Significant at the .05 level (F of 3.07 necessary for significance)

Tukey's t Ratios -- Contrasting City Commuters, Residence Hall Students and Rural Commuters On Each CUES Scale

	Scale (t Ratios)				
Group	Practicality	Community	Awareness	Propriety	Scholarship
Residence Hall / City Commuters	1.06	3.36*	1.79	3.11*	2.11*
City Commuters / Rural Commuters	3.77*	2.38*	2.07*	1.36	1.51
Residence Hall / Rural Commuters	6.18*	1.05	1.86	0.24	0.90

*Significant at the .05 level (t of 1.99 necessary for significance)

REFERENCES

Dollar, R. J. Student characteristics and choice of housing. The Journal of College Student Personnel, May, 1966-7, 147-150.

Feldman, K. A. and Newcomb, T. M. The Impact of College On Students. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., Vol. 1, 1969.

Gelso, C. J. and Sims, D. M. Perceptions of a junior college environment. Journal of College Student Personnel, 1968-9.

Jencks, C. and Riesman, D. The Academic Revolution. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1968.

Lindahl, C. Impact of living arrangements on students environmental perceptions. Journal of College Student Personnel, 1967-8, 10-15.

Murray, H. A. Explorations in Personality: A Clinical and Experimental Study of Fifty Men of College Age. New York: Oxford University Press, 1938.

Newcomb, T. M. and Wilson, E. K. College Peer Groups. Chicago: Aldini Publishing Company, 1966.

Pace, C. R. College and University Environmental Scales: Technical Manual. Princeton: Educational Testing Service, 1963.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

OCT 21 1970

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION